

Message Text

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45/70

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

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NIC-01 CAB-09 COME-00 EB-11 FAA-00 RSR-01 EURE-00

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O R 151951 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5746

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 08610

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (T E X T)

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN, US, UR, WB

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE APPROACH TO SOVIETS ON BERLIN
CORRIDOR CEILING ISSUE

REF: COPENHAGEN 1322

SUMMARY: DUE TO ABSENCE OF FRG AND FRENCH REPS, IT
HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE BONN GROUP DISCUSS-
ION OF 10,000 FOOT ISSUE (REFTEL). EMBASSY OFFICER
DID CONDUCT DETAILED EXAMINATION OF ISSUE WITH UK
REPS ON AFTERNOON OF JUNE 15. AFTER CONSIDERBABLE
DISCUSSION, UK REP (CROMARTIE) SAID THAT WHILE HE STILL
HESITATED TO RECOMMEND ACCEPTANCE OF THE US PROPOSAL TO
LONDON, HE WOULD REPORT OUR ARGUMENTS ONCE AGAIN AND ASK
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FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS IN TIME FOR BONN GROUP CONSIDERATION ON MONDAY, JUNE 18. CROMARTIE HINTED THAT IF APPROVAL FROM LONDON WERE TO BE OBTAINED, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE BASED ON AN UNDERSTANDING, REACHED IN THE BONN GROUP, ON HOW THE US WOULD DEAL WITH POSSIBLE SOVIET REACTIONS TO OUR PROPOSAL. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON THE VARIOUS TACTICAL QUESTIONS RAISED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. DUE TO VARIOUS MEETINGS AND VACATIONS, NEITHER THE FRG FOREIGN OFFICE NOR THE FRENCH EMBASSY WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE A REPRESENTATION FOR BONN GROUP CONSIDERATION OF THE 10,000 FOOT CEILING QUESTION. IN ORDER TO CONTINUE CONSIDERATION, EMBASSY OFFICER CONDUCTED DETAILED BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED WITH CROMARTIE AND BERMAN OF THE UK EMBASSY ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 15. CROMARTIE SAID THAT HE TOO WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO HAVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR A BONN GROUP CONSIDERATION BEFORE MONDAY, JUNE 18.

2. IN PRESENTING THE ISSUE TO CROMARTIE, EMBASSY OFFICER STRESSED OUR VIEW THAT WE WERE FACING A UNIQUE TACTICAL SITUATION WHICH MADE IT TO THE ADVANTAGE OF ALL THREE POWERS TO ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN SOVIET ACQUIESCENCE TO HIGHER ALTITUDES WITHOUT BECOMING INVOLVED IN QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE. HE STRESSED THAT DISCUSSION WOULD BE BROKEN OFF IMMEDIATELY IF THE SOVIETS TRIED TO BROADEN THE NEGOTIATIONS TO OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING BERLIN.

3. CROMARTIE SAID THE UK HAD APPRECIATED EXPLANATIONS OF OUR VIEWS RECEIVED IN BONN, LONDON AND COPENHAGEN, BUT THAT, AT LEAST WITHIN THE BONN EMBASSY, THERE CONTINUED TO BE IMPORTANT DOUBTS ABOUT THE WISDOM OF PROCEEDING WITH THIS MATTER AT THIS CRITICAL POINT IN TIME. CROMARTIE SAID BRITISH DOUBTS HAD BEEN REINFORCED RATHER THAN EASED BY THE SCHEEL PRESENTATION AT THIS WEEK'S QUADRIPARTITE DINNER. HE GAVE THE FOLLOWING DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF CONTINUING UK CONCERNS:

A. THE INITIATIVE WITH THE SOVIETS ON LUFTHANSA'S
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TEGEL STOP WHICH HAD BEEN AGREED AT THE QUADRIPARTITE DINNER WOULD MEAN THAT THE THREE POWERS WOULD BE CONSIDERING POTENTIALLY COMPLICATED DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS IN A SHORT TIME. CROMARTIE SAID THE BRITISH WERE WORRIED THAT US MENTION OF THE 10,000 FOOT QUESTION IN WASHINGTON WOULD AT A MINIMUM COMPLICATE MATTERS REGARDING THE TEGEL STOP; AT WORST IT COULD HAVE A

NEGATIVE AFFECT ON THESE DISCUSSIONS.

B. THE BRITISH WERE WORRIED (AS NOTED IN PARA 4(F) OF BONN 7377) THAT WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS, THE ALLIED POSITION WITH REGARD TO BERLIN CIVIL AVIATION WOULD BE WORSENERED. A POSITIVE OUTCOME COULD INDICATE THAT WE HAD ENTERED INTO A CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS ON THE CEILING LIMIT. THE SOVIETS MIGHT ALSO CLAIM THAT INCREASED ALTITUDE LIMITS WOULD BE TIED TO THE US- SOVIET BILATERAL. IF PROBLEMS WERE EXPERIENCED IN BILATERAL RELATIONS, THEY MIGHT BE TRANSFERRED TO BERLIN. IF THE OUTCOME WERE NEGATIVE, THE SOVIETS MIGHT CONSIDER THAT THE MATTER HAD BEEN SETTLED ONCE AND FOR ALL. CROMARTIE NOTED THAT ALLIED CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR BERLIN

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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USMISSION BERLIN

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CONTAINED POSSIBLE MOVES ABOVE 10,000 FEET. HE SAID
THE BRITISH WERE WORRIED SUCH PLANS MIGHT BE PREJUDICED

BY A NEGATIVE OUTCOME.

4. CROMARTIE SAW SOME LOGIC IN ARGUMENTS BY THE EMBASSY OFFICER THAT SKILLFUL PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSITION COULD GET AROUND MOST OF THE DIFFICULTIES DESCRIBED ABOVE. HE HINTED THAT THE BRITISH MIGHT BE ABLE TO GO ALONG IF THERE WERE A QUADRIpartite UNDERSTANDING ON HOW THE WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS WOULD AFFECT THE UPCOMING EXERCISE ON THE TEGEL STOP AND IF IT COULD BE UNDERSTOOD HOW THE US WOULD REACT TO ANY TACTICAL PLOYS THE SOVIETS MIGHT PUT UP. CROMARTIE WAS VAGUE ON WHAT THE BRITISH HAD IN MIND, BUT SEEMED TO BE AIMING FOR A SHORT AGREED BONN GROUP PAPER WHICH WOULD CONTAIN A CLEAR STATEMENT ABOUT THE POSITIONS THE US INTENDED TO ADOPT. HE SAID THAT IN ANY CASE HE COULD NOT GIVE A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION TO LONDON UNTIL THERE HAD BEEN

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FURTHER QUADRIpartite DISCUSSION AND THAT HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ENGAGE IN SUCH DISCUSSION UNTIL HE RECEIVED

A FURTHER INDICATION OF LONDON'S VIEWS. ESCALATE THE MATTER TO A HIGHER LEVEL, ESPECIALLY WITH THE TOP SOVIET LEADERS BEING IN WASHINGTON AT THE SAME TIME? HOW WOULD THE US REACT TO SUCH AN ATTEMPT?

D. WHAT WERE US ESTIMATES OF THE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS OF THE APPROACH? IF THE CHANCES WERE NOT HIGH, DID WE THINK IT WAS WORTH RAISING THE SUBJECT IN LIGHT OF THE LEGAL AND TACTICAL DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED?

6. EMBASSY COMMENT: WE ARE NOT AT ALL SURE THAT THE BRITISH WILL AGREE TO GO ALONG EVEN IF WE PROVIDE SATISFACTORY ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS. OUR CASE WILL, HOWEVER, BE STRENGTHENED IF WE CAN GIVE AN AUTHORITATIVE PRESENTATION ON THESE POINTS AT THE BONN GROUP MEETING, WHICH IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, JUNE 18. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE AN INDICATION OF THE TIME SCHEDULE FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS.
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